

What Are Businesses Saying about Proposals to Make Basic Pilot/E-Verify Mandatory?

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The success of America was built on ideals rooted in commerce, hard work, and the opportunity to prosper. Businesses recognize that the Basic Pilot/E-Verify program undercuts the integrity of these traditional American principles. Business leaders understand that we are a stronger nation when we remain committed to making sure everyone has the opportunity to work. Basic Pilot/E-Verify leads our nation away from economic success and competitiveness instead of prioritizing our historical values.

■ **Basic Pilot / E-Verify doesn't promote expansion opportunities or entrepreneurship.**

"Entrepreneurs don't like Big Brother syndrome, and that is what this comes down to here."

— Danette Miller, co-owner, Miller Wholesale Lumber, Tempe, Arizona¹

"Arizona at the end of the day is a desert. If we become a more risky or a more costly place of doing business than the other 49 states, which today we are, we will become a declining economy in perpetuity."

— Jason LeVecke, president of a company that owns 68 fast-food restaurants in Arizona²

"The moment the state government gets involved they don't stop with just mandating E-Verify; they decide to be creative, and that leaves employers with different laws. We are supposed to have one market and be able to hire people the same way in Virginia as you do in Oklahoma."

— Angelo Amador, director of immigration policy, U.S. Chamber of Commerce³

■ **Basic Pilot / E-Verify doesn't promise reliability or accuracy.**

"When the system's accuracy is improved to the 99% level, we will be glad to use it. But, until then, it will do more harm than good."

— Mike Bruner, chairman of the board, Associated Builders and Contractors of Florida⁴

"We don't consider the [Basic Pilot/E-Verify] database to be reliable. There are many reasons why an employee could have what they call a mismatch in that system."

— Sarah Oliver, human resources director, Grimmway Farms (California)⁵

"I think most employers really want to be in compliance with the law. But if we're going to end up firing people because of inaccuracies in the data, that's a problem. If you dismiss someone who is here legally, you're liable for 'wrongful termination' [of an employee]. It's a sticky question."

— Tim Hartigan, president, St. Paul Brass and Aluminum Foundry, St. Paul, Minnesota⁶

"You kind of like to hear things are going to work before you're mandated to use them."

— Kelly Knott, Associated General Contractors of America⁷

"The problem we have is the E-Verify system doesn't do what it purports to do."

— Tom Bingham, president and chief executive officer, Utah Manufacturers Association⁸

"So much of our hiring is done in the field where there is not immediate computer access. It is over a week to 10 days before paperwork makes it back to the office to start the [E-Verify] process. . . . [T]hat would mean we'd have real time problems."

— David Dayvault, president, Kansas Independent Oil and Gas Association⁹

■ **Basic Pilot / E-Verify doesn't protect small business.**

"The cost, technological demands and staff time the E-Verify system requires comes at a time when small businesses are struggling already. Implementation of this system will also increase existing discrimination issues facing all minority business owners."

— Juana Horton, owner, Horton Interpreting Inc., Rhode Island¹⁰

"Some small businesses would be forced to close their doors."

— Jessica Johnson Bennett, government relations director, Plumbing Heating Cooling Contractors Association¹¹

"It may seem simple to legislators, but once it gets applied, each business has to do another task for the government and that could be difficult."

— John Cronin, executive director, Rhode Island Small Business Development Center¹²

"Preparing for the transition to using E-Verify was extremely costly and disruptive to our operations. All of our restaurant managers, assistant managers, and directors of operations had to attend external training. The training cost the company both in the



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fees that are paid to attend the training sessions and in lost productivity of these critical employees. . . .

“MCL Enterprises is fortunate to have the staff to deal with these issues and allow for redundancy and backup. For smaller operations that do not have that luxury, the burdens will be even greater.”

— Mitchell Laird, president, MCL Enterprises, Phoenix, Arizona¹³

“They put all this responsibility on us and threaten us if we don’t comply. The thing that upset me the most is when I couldn’t go on the [E-Verify] system, there’s nothing in Arizona to help an employer. The answer I seemed to get was that it’s a federal program.”

— Laura Kendall, co-owner, Intricate Builders LLC, Phoenix, Arizona (Kendall told a reporter that she had difficulty

accessing E-Verify and completing the program’s online tutorial.)¹⁴

■ **Basic Pilot / E-Verify doesn’t safeguard economic well-being for businesses or the economy.**

“At a time when the federal budget is limited, there is talk of a possible recession looming in some quarters and the meat and poultry industry is under duress from high grain inputs and trade barriers — shackling businesses with an unfunded federal mandate is not wise.”

— Janet M. Riley, senior vice president for public affairs and professional development, American Meat Institute¹⁵

“[Small family-owned farms] don’t have a personnel department to handle verification. Many of them do not even have high-speed Internet access

that is needed to get into the E-Verify system.”¹⁶

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“[I]f this E-verify were to be forced upon . . . America or the agricultural sector to be specific, without a broader solution we would lose at least three-fourths of the agriculture work force that will result to nothing short of disaster or something close to death in the agriculture economy.”¹⁷

— Craig Regelbrugge, vice president of government relations, American Nursery and Landscape Association

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SOURCES

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